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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
RELATING TO NATIONAL SECURITY

State Dept., JCS reviews completed

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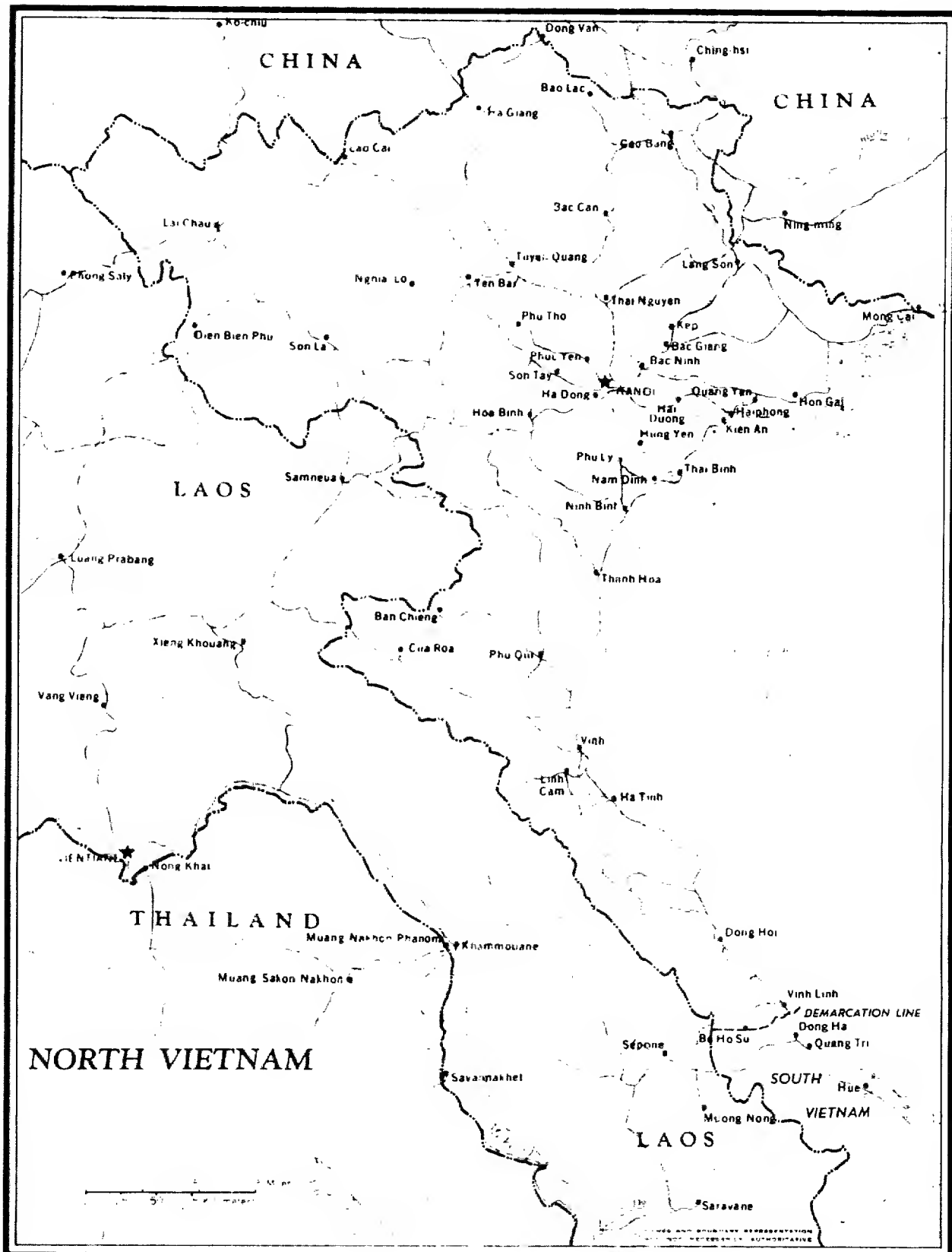
*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: South Korean Marines, participating in a long-term combined allied operation in coastal Phu Yen Province, were attacked twice early on 31 January by Communist forces of at least reinforced company strength. The attacks were successfully repulsed, resulting in total reported enemy losses of 179 killed and two captured, as against total Korean casualties of nine killed and 19 wounded. Since the allied operation, known as VAN BUREN, was initiated on 19 January, cumulative Viet Cong casualties are listed as 305 killed, 26 captured, and 475 suspects detained, as against allied losses to date of 35 killed (seven US, 28 ROK), 121 wounded (48 US, 73 ROK) and one Korean missing.

In Operation MASHER in northeastern Binh Dinh Province, US, South Vietnamese, and South Korean troops are continuing to press their offensive against stubborn resistance from entrenched Viet Cong/North Vietnamese forces. Communist losses in the operation to date stand at 461 killed, 130 captured, and 463 suspects apprehended. Allied casualties so far number 154 killed (103 US, 48 ARVN, three ROK), 367 wounded (192 US, 168 ARVN, seven ROK), with one American missing.

A related US/South Korean operation, DOUBLE EAGLE, sweeping toward Binh Dinh Province in the southern part of adjacent Quang Ngai Province, is encountering only sporadic mortar and small-arms fire. Only light casualties have been reported to date. In the northern part of Quang Ngai Province, the paramilitary outpost which was overrun on the night of 28-29 January has now been reoccupied by South Vietnamese troops.

(continued)



Closer to Saigon, US 1st Infantry Division troops participating in a search-and-destroy operation in Phuoc Tuy and Bien Hoa provinces have destroyed five recently-occupied Viet Cong base camps, plus a ton of rice and miscellaneous supplies. Only sporadic contact has been reported, with friendly losses of only one killed and 18 wounded, as against 14 Viet Cong killed and 11 suspects taken. An 18-day operation--BUCKSKIN--in Hau Nghia Province by a brigade of the same US division has terminated with total enemy losses of 93 killed, 11 captured, and 13 suspects detained as against US losses of 27 killed and 184 wounded.

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Premier Ky has told a US official that he plans a reorganization in early February which will include splitting the present Ministry of Economy into two separate ministries for foreign trade and internal economic affairs. He also plans to add four native southerners to his own staff to handle such matters as corruption, refugees, Viet Cong defectors, and port operations. The reorganization is probably motivated by both the need to bring greater efficiency to programs related to these problems, and by a desire to counter charges that the Ky government includes incompetents and is overly influenced by native northerners.

Military Developments in North Vietnam: Adverse weather sharply reduced the planned number of strikes in the resumption of Rolling Thunder operations over North Vietnam, and limited the attacks to the southern portion of the DRV. Of the 300 sorties that were scheduled, fewer than 75 were actually flown. Although the poor weather also hampered bomb damage assessment in many cases, preliminary reports indicate that a number of bridges were destroyed or damaged and one road segment was cut.

Three US aircraft were downed by ground fire. Only one pilot has not yet been picked up and search-and-rescue efforts are underway to recover him.

(continued)

Reports concerning one of the rescue operations indicate that during the bombing lull the Communists have evidently devised new tactics to combat these operations. Although many small boats were noted in the area where the pilot's raft was sighted--about 250 yards off shore--there was no indication that the Communists were attempting to capture him. When the rescue plane landed and began taxiing toward the raft, however, heavy automatic-weapons and mortar fire erupted from shore. The pilot was rescued only after US combat planes strafed the beach repeatedly to suppress the enemy fire.

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*North Vietnam: [World reaction to the US resumption of bombing in North Vietnam has followed generally anticipated lines.]

[Soviet information media have centered around the theme that the US peace effort amounted only to an exercise in hypocrisy and a smoke screen to cover preparations for "expanding the aggression in South-east Asia." The Soviet commentaries review again the Soviet position--full support for North Vietnam's Four Points and insistence on a permanent cessation of bombing as a precondition to negotiations.]

[An official Soviet Government statement on 31 January alleged that the US had chosen to ignore a new peace initiative by North Vietnam. The statement said the initiative is found in Ho Chi Minh's letter of 24 January calling for acceptance of the Four Points and an unconditional end to the bombing and all other military acts against North Vietnam.]

[East European commentary tended to follow the Soviet lead in describing what it called US hypocrisy, preparations for further "aggression," and terrorism.]

[North Vietnamese propaganda concerning the renewed attacks has been scanty. However, Hanoi lodged a violent formal protest to the chairman of the International Control Commission on 31 January. This repeated earlier Communist charges that the US peace moves were nothing but "tricks" to cover up plans for further escalation of the conflict. Hanoi demanded once more that the US attacks be halted, that "aggression" in South Vietnam be ended, and that all foreign troops be withdrawn.]

[In Communist China the People's Daily on 1 February declared that "the resumption of bombing shows that US imperialism is at its wit's end on the Vietnam question and is vainly seeking to get out of its predicament by means of war expansion. But this will only

bring still more disastrous defeats to the US aggressors. However the Johnson administration may struggle, the Vietnamese people are bound to win and US imperialism is bound to lose. This is a foregone conclusion."]

[All Peking papers on 1 February gave front page coverage to the downing of five US planes and the damaging of many others over North Vietnam.]

[Several Havana commentaries attack the US for resuming the bombing. One says the US Government is trying to resume the air raids to continue to subject the Hanoi government to an indecent blackmail, aimed at forcing it to exert pressure on the NFLSV patriots to quit the fight. They are critical of the US plan to take the Vietnam matter to the UN.]

[Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson stated he regretted that the US had found it necessary to resume bombing raids. He thought a further halt to bombing was not foreclosed if and when the circumstances suggest that such a pause would be helpful. He added that the dialogue between the two sides has not been completely cut off.]

[The Helsinki press commentary declares that neither the US nor the DRV are as yet prepared to meet around a conference table. The Finns conjecture about the effects the bombings will have on Soviet policy toward the US; further hostility is predicted in US - Communist Chinese relations.]

[The Danish foreign minister, the Swedish premier, and the Norwegian premier, who are attending the 14th Session of the Nordic Council in Copenhagen, expressed regrets about the bombing and stressed the need for the parties concerned to negotiate.]

[London expressed "sympathy" with the reasons that led to resumption of bombing. Pope Paul VI

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was reported disappointed that his weekend call for UN arbitration in Vietnam had not prevented the resumption.]

[The French press agency in Paris asserts that the situation is not ripe for a settlement of the conflict. It adds "the French Government is of the opinion today, as in August 1963, that a settlement of the conflict can be expected only if the Vietnamese are in a position to settle their own internal differences, without interference from abroad."]

[Japanese official reaction was more sympathetic to the West than previously, stating regret that the failure of the Communists to respond to the US peace efforts had forced the resumption of bombing. The commentary said that Japan would continue its own effort to bring disputants to the conference table and hoped that the US would do likewise.]

[Malaysia also blamed negative reaction from Hanoi for the US action. Other Asian capitals have broadcast factual accounts of the bombings, but have not yet commented on them.]

[Australian government sources indicated official support for the US decision to resume bombing.]

[UN Secretary General U Thant is reported to have said that the renewed bombing will "hinder diplomatic efforts aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the Vietnamese problem."]

[There has been no significant comment from Africa and Latin America.] (

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Common Market: [As a result of last week's meeting of the EEC Council, France will evidently end its six-month boycott of community activities, but the major issue of a member's veto right remains unresolved.]

[The six members have recognized in effect that there is no possibility of an understanding on majority voting at this time. The Five were willing to state that on important questions the Council should try for a "reasonable time" to reach unanimity, but they refused to rule out the possibility that a majority vote would then be taken. The French for their part implied that Paris would not feel bound by such a veto.]

[The French demands on Commission-Council relations were significantly scaled down in the final agreement. The Commission's right to make proposals for Council decision has been specifically reaffirmed. The new code of behavior is still subject to further negotiation between the Council and the Commission.]

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[In the opinion of the US mission to the EEC, the French obtained no major concessions on points of substance. Moreover, in the agenda which was agreed on for an early meeting of the Council, the Kennedy Round was included, along with such questions as agricultural financing.]

[There is considerable concern among the Five that issues which remain to be dealt with in coming meetings will not be easily resolved. For example, hard bargaining is expected in the forthcoming negotiations on the personnel of a new Commission. In addition, the French boycott and the recriminations which have followed during the past six months have seriously impaired the "community spirit" which has been so important to the EEC's functioning in the past.]

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NOTES

Dominican Republic: [There is no sign of a break in the military chiefs' defiance of President Garcia Godoy's order that they leave the country. Defense Secretary Rivera Caminero is telling US officials that he personally is willing to cooperate, but that pressure from subordinate officers makes it impossible for the chiefs to obey the President. Rivera apparently is trying to arrange for US ambassadors Bunker and Bennett to meet with representative officers to explain to the military why command changes are necessary and for the ambassadors to learn for themselves the strength of the military's feeling on the matter.]

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*India: In the fourth day of food rioting in India's Communist-infested Kerala State, student mobs yesterday blocked roads and fought the police in two of the state's major cities. All rail movement, including trains carrying rice to the hungry state, was stopped because of sabotage of the tracks. The government arrest of over 100 persons on 29 January had little effect, and a serious security situation will develop if the riots become widespread.

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Colombia: Communist guerrilla bands on 28 January killed 13 and wounded three during attacks about 100 miles southwest of Bogota. Six soldiers were among the dead. The US Embassy comments that since robbery or self-defense apparently did not motivate the attacks, they may herald a new stage of offensive harassment by small groups of guerrillas.

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The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Department of Justice

The Attorney General

The Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Director

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The United States Information Agency

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